

Inside the DOS

Half Gallon Pricing Fuel Prices Continue to Rise

Fuel prices continue to hit new highs almost daily. The statewide average for unleaded regular now tops \$4 per gallon.

Retail dealers who have mechanical price computers are having a hard time replacing older price computers that are only capable of computing to \$3.99 per gallon. According to industry sources, orders for upgraded mechanical price computers are backlogged 20 weeks. Replacement costs average \$700 to \$800 and require new dial faces. If the dealer has an inside readout the pulse sending unit must also be changed.

Due to the backlog in availability of replacement parts, we have received a number of calls from dealers looking for

direction regarding this dilemma. The only



per gallon price and then when the delivery has been completed, double the price as indicated on the customer display. A similar situation occurred in the 1970s when the oil shortage caused the retail price to go above a dollar per gallon.

In order to inform consumers and eliminate pricing complaints, a highly visible sign must be posted on the dispensers explaining that the price is being computed at one half the advertised

Field Standards

Field standards used in the annual certification and sealing of commercial devices are required to be periodically compared to state standards. The certification of field test standards is a basic requirement in enforcing legal metrology requirements for commercial devices.

Beginning in July, a schedule will be completed and jurisdictions will be notified when to bring their working field standards to the Metrology Laboratory in Waltham for certification. Standards should be cleaned and painted if necessary prior to

Training for New Sealers

Training Officer Steve Berard conducted a training program for new sealers at the Division's training facility in Waltham. Steve was assisted by James Cassidy, Cambridge Sealer.

The orientation session included a review of the statutes pertaining to weights and measures and an overview of record keeping, inspection processes, and fees from a local jurisdiction's perspective. The orientation session was attended by 15 recently appointed local inspectors in preparation for their certification exam. State law requires new sealers to become certified within one

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NCWM Annual Meeting Burlington, VT

The National Conference on Weights and Measures (NCWM) Annual meeting will be held in Burlington, Vermont July 13 to 17 at the Sheraton Burlington Hotel. This year's theme is "Seeking Balance." We in the weights and measures community face many



many decisions during the week that impact consumers, wholesalers, equipment manufacturers, retailers and regulatory programs. The Division has adopted several of the rules and regulations developed by the NCWM and we urge all to take advantage of this opportunity to attend the conference. You can register for the confer-

On the web at www.mass.gov/dos

Motor Fuel Complaints Increase

High gasoline prices have resulted in an increase in consumer complaints. Rising prices have also prompted retailers to introduce new sales tactics such as offering fuel discounts up to twenty cents per gallon based on the amount of money spent inside the station and tying fuel savings to the such services as car washes.

The information posted on street signs is critical in reducing consumer complaints. It must inform consumers that the advertised price pertains to a specific grade, or is linked to buying an additional service or making a purchase with cash or a credit card. If the price on the street sign is conditional and



NEWMA

The Northeastern Weights and Measures Association (NEWMA) recently held its annual conference in Fishkill, NY. The meeting was well attended by state and regional officials and members of industry. Many topics were discussed affecting consumers and businesses. The NEWMA standing committees reviewed the agenda items to be considered and voted on at the NCWM Annual Conference being held in Burlington, Vermont. NEWMA's fall meeting will be held at the Sheraton Hotel in Springfield, MA.

Meeting Schedule

Eastern Mass Wts. & Meas. June 25, 2008
Brookside Club, Bourne, MA

NCWM July 13 to 17, 2008
Burlington, VT

can only be received by meeting other requirements, those requirements must be clearly stated, highly visible, and no less than one-half the size of the motor fuel price that appears on the sign. If retailers fail to present the information in this manner they may be accused of using a bait and switch sales tactic.

Consumer complaints can be made to the Division of Standards or your local weights and measures department. To file a complaint with the Division consumers should call 617-727-3482 or email standards.mail@state.ma.us.